

RESOURCES

NATURE, HISTORY AND HORTICULTURE IN FAIRFAX COUNTY

VOLUME 4, NO.3 SUMMER 2004

PARK Wise

Keeping Our Community Healthy and Wealthy

Hearth, mind, family, community, even property values — the beautiful parks and green space of Fairfax County bring prosperity to our lives in all of these ways.

If good health is currency (and indeed it is), then parks are a gold mine. Hike along a trail dotted with wildflowers and watch the sunlight flicker through the trees. Listen to the catbirds and take a deep breath. These are the ingredients that make for a happy heart and a healthy one, too. Whether you're taking a walk on a woodland path, a spin on your bicycle, or volunteering on an outdoor project, you're treating yourself to an extra dose of health-boosting, calorie-burning activity. Parks help to keep us fit from head to toe.

This past fall, U.S. Surgeon General Vice Admiral Richard H. Carmona acknowledged the starring role parks play in promoting individual and community health when he spoke at the National Recreation and Parks Association convention. Carmona shared his conviction that *parks are truly the heart of the community...your parks and recreation centers help improve the quality of people's lives. What we all have in common is this: We are partners in the business of disease prevention and health promotion.*

So grab a friend for a long walk and a long talk in a Fairfax County park. Besides the physical activity, it will help you relax and decompress. That's right — parks are good for mental health, too. It's the ideal place to let go of stress and anxiety. Ask any one of the hundreds of volunteers at Fairfax County's nature preserves, garden centers or historical parks, and they'll tell you how happy they feel

Green space and parklands bolster individual and community prosperity. They are inseparable from our quality of life in Fairfax County.

about their park time. As long-time volunteer Henry Glasgow commented, *Volunteering in any of the parks is the perfect antidote to the frenetic pace of modern life.* Volunteer or visitor, spending time in nature brings mental healing, solace and renewal to people. From William Blake to Robert Frost, the healing power of nature is an evergreen song.

Hankering for some family quality time? Turn off the video games, pack a picnic and head for a Fairfax County park. Every day, the

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summer Time summer Time

Sick of cicadas? Before you know it, they'll be back underground and it will be summer fun in the summer sun and concerts under the stars

Under the Light of the Moon

Talk about fun. All summer long, the nature centers — Ellanor C. Lawrence, Hidden Oaks, Hidden Pond, Huntley Meadows and Riverbend — have incredible nighttime programs featuring night hikes, camping and campfires, storytelling and all-around exploring and discovering the fascinating creatures of the night, including reptiles, amphibians, bats, owls and more.

*Call the parks
(see page 3)
to reserve spaces.*



Kidwell's Farm Babies Need Their Rest

Hours are now 9 am to 5 pm.

In order to protect the health and welfare of the farm animals, Kidwell Farm at Frying Pan Park has changed its hours. The farm now opens at 9 am in the morning and gates are closed and locked at 5 pm. The rest of Frying Pan Park will continue to be open from dawn to dusk. In addition to providing much needed rest and quiet for the animals, the new schedule allows staff to spend more time caring for them — inspecting them for injuries or illness, seeing to their nutritional needs, and correcting safety or maintenance concerns. Thank you for your understanding, cooperation and support of Frying Pan Park.

Flea Market Bonanza

Saturday, July 31st, 9 am to 1 pm.

FRYING PAN PARK

Vendors, turn your used goods into cash! Treasure hunters, get them at bargain prices at the flea market. For more information and to reserve a vendor's space, call the RMD volunteer office at **703-324-8750**. It's \$30/space for vendors, FREE for shoppers. Space registration proceeds benefit the Friends of Huntley Meadows and the Resource Management Division's Volunteer Program. See you there.

FREE CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT SERIES



Every Saturday in June, July and August
10 am, June 12 through August 21, 2004.
For more information, call 703-325-8566.
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks



Equal Access/ Special Accommodations

The Fairfax County Park Authority is committed to equal access in all programs and services. Special accommodations will be provided upon request. Please call the ADA/Access coordinator at **703-324-8563**, at least 10 working days in advance of the date services are needed.

ADA/Access Coordinator
703-324-8563
TTY 703-803-3354
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/ada.htm

RESOURCES

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Visit *ResOURCES* online at
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resources

♻️ *ResOURCES* is printed on 100% recycled paper.

Were You an Outdoors Kind of Kid?

When you were little, did you love running around outside wild and happy with your friends? Did you love exploring the woods, tuned in to the bugs, trees and animals? Did you love telling stories around the campfire about days of yore? Was that a resounding YES?

Then you may be a natural-born park volunteer and/or heritage interpreter. When you volunteer, you join hundreds of dedicated (and fun!) folks who share your passion for nature and Virginia's rich history. Call your local park listed here, or call/email the following Volunteer Coordinators.

Volunteering

erin.chernisky@fairfaxcounty.gov • 703-324-8750

Interpretive Services

mona.enquist-johnston@fairfaxcounty.gov • 703-324-8750

Archaeology and Collections Cultural Resource Protection

robert.wharton@fairfaxcounty.gov • 703-534-3881

Master Gardeners Program

sandra.flowers@fairfaxcounty.gov • 703-941-7987

Are You New to Fairfax County?

Discover our area's beautiful forests, gardens and historical sites. What better way to enjoy our county's rich history and natural resources? When you visit our county parks, you become part of them, and begin your own family history in Northern Virginia.

What's RMD?

RMD stands for Resource Management Division. It is the part of the Park Authority responsible for natural, historical and horticultural resources.

Burke Lake Park
7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station
Call 703-323-6600

Colvin Run Mill
10017 Colvin Run Road
Great Falls
Call 703-759-2771

Ellanor C. Lawrence Park
5040 Walney Road, Chantilly
Call 703-631-0013

Frying Pan Park
2709 West Ox Road, Herndon
Call 703-437-9101

Green Spring Gardens Park
4603 Green Spring Rd., Alexandria
Call 703-642-5173

Hidden Oaks Nature Center
7701 Royce Street, Annandale
Call 703-941-1065

Hidden Pond Nature Center
8511 Greeley Blvd., Springfield
Call 703-451-9588

Huntley Meadows Park
3701 Lockheed Blvd., Alexandria
Call 703-768-2525

Lake Accotink Park
7500 Accotink Park Rd., Springfield
Call 703-569-3464

Lake Fairfax Park
1400 Lake Fairfax Drive, Reston
Call 703-471-5414

Riverbend Park
8700 Potomac Hills Street
Great Falls
Call 703-759-9018

Sully Historic Site
Sully Road, Chantilly
Call 703-437-1794

Need directions or more information?
Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks

"The Market is Now Open!" *Heroes of the Fairfax County Farmers' Markets*

by Margie Joyce, Program Assistant

The Market Masters arrive early in the morning as the trucks pull in from as far away as Northern Neck and Pennsylvania. They make sure each vendor sets up properly in the space allotted. They begin the Market exactly on time with a bell or whistle, and call out The market is now open!

During the four hours the markets are open, they serve as farm inspector, health inspector, greeter, attendance taker and dog handler in turn, trouble-shooting whatever problems arise. Hours later, they close their markets, and make sure each departing vendor has cleaned their space. Only then can they call it a day.

During market season, they do this once a week for at least 24 weeks. And how much is this person paid to make sure our Farmers' Markets run smoothly and on time? Not with money, but with the gratitude of the community, delighted to be able to buy fresh local produce. Needless to add, their contribution is enormous.

There are nine Volunteer Market Masters in Fairfax County, one at each location, and some have willingly served for over 20 years.

Caps off to our heroes, the Market Masters:

Bo White and Colis Gilbert, Annandale

Giovanna Prestigiacomio, Burke

Mary Presta, Fairfax

John Dudzinsky, Herndon

Robert Cain, Kingstowne

Clay Ormsby, McLean

Gil McCutcheon, Mt. Vernon

John Lovaas, Reston

Edward Bielecki, Vienna



See our Farmers' Market website page for locations and schedule, or to volunteer: www.greenspring.org, or call 703-642-5173.

Stopping Encroachment Means Being a Good Park Neighbor

The phone rings often in the busy Resource Management Division and Park Operations offices of the Park Authority. On some days, it seems like one call after another involves encroachment.

No, Mr. Breen, you can't keep your children's swing set on parkland. You'll have to move it out of there.

That's encroachment — placing personal property on parkland.

I see. Your neighbors are dumping their grass clippings on parkland. Thank you. We'll check into it.

That's encroachment — dumping your own yard debris on parkland.

Yes, ma'am. I understand it looks like scrubby underbrush. But it's actually a habitat for both plants and smaller animals, so destroying it to make it look like your yard cannot and should not be done.

And that's encroachment — destroying parkland to expand your yard area.



This homeowner cleared his backyard and then dumped piles of unsightly yard debris and downed trees on parkland.

It is common for homeowners to extend their backyards into parks by clearing native vegetation and creating additional lawn area. Other homeowners dump grass clippings or yard debris, sometimes thinking such composting helps the natural environment.

In truth, encroachments cause a big costly mess. Clearing, mowing, and dumping debris promotes the spread of invasive plants and harms native plants with an excess of chemicals. Piles of yard waste attract rodents and snakes. Removing trees and vegetation reduces the tree cover needed to mitigate air pollution. Last but not least, using park land as though it is personal property robs the public of its use.

Some encroachments may seem trivial, but in the worst cases, encroachments can destroy wetlands, trees, native vegetation, and wildlife. Since virtually all Fairfax County parks suffer from encroachments to some degree, the collective impact is enormous. Besides the environmental damage, it's expensive. The Park Authority spends thousands of dollars every year cleaning up encroachments.

Here are some guidelines for preventing encroachment:

- If you don't own the land, then don't put anything on it. It's that simple. If you see a neighbors encroaching on park land, consider talking to them about it (or giving them this article), or call the Park Operations Division at **703-324-8591**.
- Don't mow past your property line. High grass and other vegetation buffer streams and provide animal habitats. A buffer slows down the flow of stormwater runoff which prevents erosion. A buffer also traps many pollutants which otherwise end up in the stream.
- If poison ivy is growing on the park side of your property line, please leave it alone. Poison ivy, a native plant, is a wonderful food supply for birds and other wildlife.
- Don't dump grass clippings and other yard debris on parkland. Phosphorous, nitrogen, and potassium — found in fertilizer, sewage, detergents, and animal wastes — are not harmful to the environment in low doses. However, when these excess nutrients are washed into a stream, they can cause an overgrowth of algae, which depletes oxygen in the water and affects the health of other aquatic plants and animals.

If you have one of Fairfax County's parks for a neighbor, then be a good neighbor back. Treat your park neighbor like the treasure it is, so it will be sustainable for generations.

Sources:

*Fairfax County Park Authority and Conservation Currents:
Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District*

Questions or Concerns about Encroachment?

Call the park's site manager to discuss concerns, questions or to report possible encroachments.

Site staff will be able to respond most quickly and will appreciate the information.

Or, call the Park Operations Division at **703-324-8591**.

Ordinary in Their Day, Extraordinary to Us

By Jeanne Niccolls

The Historic Collections section of the Fairfax County Park Authority collects, preserves, and catalogs the material culture that represents our county's heritage. The several thousand historical objects that make up the Collections support interpretation at our historic sites and outreach exhibits, and truly offer a window to the past. Here are the histories associated with just a few special objects:



Tooth pullers? Try sugar nippers, used for chipping off sugar from a block.

Sugar Nippers

Made of steel, this early 19th century implement was probably made in England. In early America, refined sugar was compressed into molds until it formed dense, hard, cone-shaped loafs. Special tools like these sugar "nippers" were used to cut off small pieces of sugar from the loaf, which were then ground in a mortar with a pestle and used to flavor and sweeten beverages, preserves, confections, and many other sweets.

Dough Cutter

Hand-wrought by a blacksmith from rolled and sheet iron, this early 19th century cooking utensil was probably made in America. Family tradition notes that this object was found by the Haight family when they moved to Sully in 1842. Simply constructed, this handy kitchen tool was used to cut out circles of cookie or biscuit dough prior to baking.



Not a stamp. It's a dough cutter for cookies and biscuits.

Cage Bingo Spinner

With its painted metal cage and numbered and lettered wood balls, this cage bingo spinner, probably made in America, bears great similarity to machines used in 21st century bingo games. In the mid-20th century, members of the Great Falls Grange used this cage spinner for their bingo nights. The game, which originated in 16th century Italy, was called "beano" in the US until renamed by an enterprising salesman after hearing someone accidentally call out "bingo" in excitement upon winning.



This old cage bingo spinner was used at Great Falls Grange.



An elegant table that hides a sewing machine.

Sewing Table

American Hepplewhite in style, this circa 1795 sewing table was made of mahogany and decorated with string inlay. The work bag is a reproduction. According to family tradition, Elizabeth Collins Lee brought this sewing table with her when she moved to Sully as a bride in 1795, at a time when such tables were a new, specialized furniture form. Fitted with two small drawers at each end and a suspended fabric bag, the sewing table held tools and fabric for fine sewing and other needlework projects.

JEANNE NICCOLLS is Collections Manager for the Park Authority.

The Historic Collections Section always needs volunteers who are detail-oriented and enjoy working with antiques and historic objects. If you are interested, call Jeanne Niccolls at 703-631-1429.

Embrace the Moment — Sometimes That's All You Can Do

Park staff were touched to read the following written by a young AmeriCorps participant who spent a week working at Kidwell farm at Frying Pan Park.

We learned a lot about keeping a farm, like milking a cow, giving pigs shots, mucking stalls, and why barns are red! While on this project, I found out that a close friend passed away. Death is new to my life, and it was hard to stay positive. Yet when I returned to work,

there was something very spiritual in seeing the newborn lambs, piglets and a calf. It was reassuring. We named the lamb Devon, after my friend. The birth of the calf was hard on the mother...and the challenge of taking care of her distracted me from my own worries and forced me to focus on the moment. And that's all you can do on a seven-day project.

Embrace the moment.

See what's new on the **ResOURCES** Website. It's all spruced up and ready for your next visit.

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resources

Green Spring Gardens Top Ten

By Cynthia A. Brown

Green Spring Gardens is a Fairfax County haven tucked a few miles inside the beltway off Little River Turnpike. There are many reasons to make Green Spring Gardens part of your scene. Here's the Top Ten to start:

1 *Tranquility*

Remember tranquility? You can find it in Green Spring's quiet, shady Native Plant Garden and the natural area around the ponds. It's an oasis in the middle of a chaotic urban area, providing a place for meditation and healing.



The lovely Rose Garden beckons visitors.

2 *Beauty*

Beauty permeates Green Spring — not just the place itself, but the people you encounter there, the staff and volunteers who are eager to help and share information.

3 *Knowledge*

Green Spring offers an amazing number of horticulture and history classes for all ages and interests including teas, tours, family programs, and cooking demonstrations. Learn about plants, trees, and flowers at Green Spring through the park's extensive plant labeling. The library contains an extensive collection filled with books, periodicals, newsletters, and handouts about gardens and horticulture.

4 *Excitement*

Excitement happens every day at Green Spring when a child sees a carrot pulled out of the ground, or a butterfly enthusiast sees an anglewing for the first time, or a photographer gets that perfect photo of the bluebells. But just to up the excitement level a little more, Green Spring also features exciting special events such as concerts, plant sales, symposiums, and the unique Fall Fling which features a rare plant auction.

5 *Stewardship*

Green Spring promotes stewardship of the environment and teaches organic gardening. One of the park's many stewardship programs shows citizens how to collect water from rainstorms and keep it on their property or at least filter what passes through a riparian buffer. The riparian buffer (which is a healthy stream bank) at Green Spring is a model for environmental stewardship.



Historic Green Spring is a masterpiece of Colonial Revival Architecture.

6 *Heritage*

Green Spring played a vital role in the agricultural and political history of Fairfax County. Famous figures are part of Green Spring, including Beatrix Ferrand, America's famed master landscape designer (who also designed Dumbarton Oaks across the river) and Walter Macomber, the architect who helped create the Colonial Revival Architecture found at Colonial Williamsburg and Mt. Vernon. In fact, Green Spring is a masterpiece of Colonial Revival Architecture.

7 *Community*

Green Spring is the site where Master Gardeners of Fairfax County are based. The Master Gardeners reach out to county citizens to help them with their horticultural questions, doing special exhibits and programs including the Eco-Savvy Gardener. The children's programs draw over 5,000 students a year. They learn about gardening, nature, and history using the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) for guidelines. Green Spring also oversees the Fairfax Farmer's Markets and Garden Plots which offer folks a place to grow their own fresh vegetables.



An abundance of vegetables grow in the Kitchen Garden.

The Green Spring library contains an extensive collection filled with books, periodicals, newsletters, and handouts about gardening and horticulture.



The annual Spring Garden Day is a popular attraction.

8 Shopping

Take a bit of Green Spring home. Visitors can purchase plants, toys, and crafts for their own garden and home at the Garden Markets, the Garden Gate Plant Shop, the Spring Plant Sale, the Fall Fling, and the Historic House and Horticulture shop.

9 Family Fun

Family Fun programs are very popular. It is an opportunity for parents to spend time with their children learning about gardening. The best part is that parents don't have to create the activity or clean up the mess!

10 Smiles

No matter how grumpy visitors are when they arrive, they can't help turning their frowns into smiles when they see all the smiling faces around them. Staff and visitors are entranced with the magic of the gardens, the friendliness of the people, and the joy that's bestowed by Mother Nature.

CYNTHIA A. BROWN is the Adult Education Coordinator/Interpretive Horticulturist at Green Spring Gardens.

Volunteer at Green Spring

For more information, call Becky Super at 703-642-5173
or visit our Park Authority website at
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/volunteer.htm

Park Leadership Goes Beyond County Lines

The professionals who staff our nature centers and historical sites are frequently called upon to share their expertise and experience with colleagues from across Virginia and the nation. This year is no exception, featuring a smattering of lively leadership activities for our highly respected park historians and interpreters.



Museum pros enjoy a hayride and tour of Frying Pan Park.

In March 2004, Frying Pan Park and Sully Historic Site hosted a field trip for the Southeast Regional Meeting of the Association for Living History Farms and Museums (ALHFAM). Park managers and staff led guests on behind-the-scene tours that highlighted the unique features of their sites. They answered

questions about protecting and interpreting historic structures and ways to make farming relevant to a suburban audience. At Sully, staff spoke with guests about the development of the Sully slave quarters and interpretation.

Also in spring, staff from Colvin Run Mill, Sully and Collections Management served on sessions and hosted colleagues attending the annual Virginia Association of Museums (VAM) Conference. Some

130 enthusiastic attendees were treated to a reception (featuring delicious treats made with the mill's whole wheat flour and cornmeal), followed by an evening grinding demonstration. A participant was heard to say, *Seeing the mill made the entire conference worthwhile.*

Park archaeologists organized and chaired a symposium and presented papers on recent contributions to Fairfax County Archaeology at the Middle Atlantic Archaeology Conference in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware. At the annual Small Museum Association, our pros from Collections Management and Colvin Run Mill presented a session on labeling historic collections.

But that's not all. A committee of Park Authority pros is helping to plan the educational programs for September's Virginia Recreation and Parks Society (VRPS) Annual Conference. Park Authority Heritage Interpreters and Resource Stewardship staff are also organizing activities to celebrate the 2007 Jamestown anniversary.

Lucky for us, we don't need to travel across the country to garner the benefits of our pros in the parks.



Charming Colvin Run Mill.

Transforming the Marie Butler Leven Preserve into a Native Arboretum

By Chris Bright, President, Earth Sangha

In 1961, Marie Butler Leven left a 20-acre tract of land in McLean to the Park Authority. For decades, the land lay untouched due to what seemed like a chain-link fence of obstacles which kept progress out. That was until Earth Sangha stepped up to the challenge. An environmental nonprofit that has partnered with the Park Authority on numerous stewardship projects, Earth Sangha proposed a practical, workable design to transform Marie Butler Leven into a native arboretum that will serve as a demonstration site for county stewardship, education, and discovery all rolled into one. This past March 28, 2004, the plan became official. Let the transformation begin.

Trillium grandiflorum

It's spring at the Marie Butler Leven Preserve. Underneath the big tulip-trees, a slope leading down to a spring is carpeted in large flowered trillium, a native wildflower. The flowers are all facing in the same direction, as if they are all expecting something. Here and there other flowers poke up among them — the pale blue stalks of Virginia bluebells, the deep maroon of the wake-robin trillium. But there are other plants on the forest floor as well — Japanese pachysandra, periwinkle, and English ivy. Eventually, these invasive plants would likely choke out the native flowers altogether. Controlling the invaders will be essential for the success of the arboretum.

The Native Arboretum project will gradually transform the preserve into a comprehensive display of native forest plants. Along with trees, it will include shrubs, vines, and wildflowers. The result will be a landscape that looks like a very diverse local forest — except that the plants will be tended and labeled, and closely related species will be grouped together for ease of comparison and education.

As far as space permits, each species will be represented by a group planting, rather than by a single specimen, to give visitors a sense of the variation typical of the species. And to make sure that

the species are represented in their local forms, all the planting stock will come from our own nursery, where we propagate exclusively from local, wild native-plant populations.

The Arboretum will make it relatively easy to develop what is probably the single most useful skill for understanding our local forests: the ability to “read” their species composition. The collection will serve as a living library — a resource for building ecological awareness and understanding.

Learning about our forests is a very effective way to learn about ourselves.

But the project is about more than just the flora itself; it's also about our relationship to that flora. In conjunction with the Park Authority and outside experts, we'll use the collection for a series of interpretive programs that explore the cultural history of our forests. Through the plants, we'll learn how our predecessors drew upon the forests for so many necessities of life — timber, fuel, medicine, food, and much else. Learning about our forests is a very effective way to learn about ourselves.

Because our landscape is so highly developed with roads, homes, and businesses, it's easy to slip into the habit of thinking that there's nothing much left out there to explore — but that's not true. We live in a fascinating place: the woodland of Fairfax County forms part of a north-south transition zone within North America's great eastern forest, one of the largest and most diverse temperate-zone forest biomes on Earth. The Native Arboretum project is intended to help us all reclaim our place within that biome.

CHRIS BRIGHT is president of Earth Sangha.

EARTH SANGHA is a nonprofit public charity based in Fairfax County. The Sangha serves a dual mission, focused on both environmental and personal health. By working with nature and through the practice of meditation, Sangha participants renew both the environment and themselves. Sangha, pronounced "song-ah," is a Buddhist term for congregation or group. Membership and activities are open to all.



Earth Sangha volunteers began working in Fairfax County's parks in 2002. They inventory the flora, remove invasive alien vegetation, and plant native species. Earth Sangha also operates a wild plant nursery featuring some 60 native species, all from local, wild populations. The nursery serves local restoration efforts by producing seedlings that are genetically diverse and representative of the full spectrum of our native forest flora, from the trees of the forest canopy to the herbaceous (nonwoody) plants of the forest floor.

Want to help out?

For more information, call or e-mail
Chris Bright at the Earth Sangha

703-764-4830

(cbright@earthsangha.org).

The Sangha's website is:
www.earthsangha.org

*Congratulations to Earth Sangha for coordinating the planting of 1,000 oaks at Riverbend Park on April 26th.
It was a big success with more than 100 volunteers!*

PARK Wise continued from page 1

parks feature engaging and creative activities everybody will enjoy — nature walks, history presentations, crafts, overnight camping, stargazing, wildlife programs — to name just a few. These pleasures make us rich in good times and memories, while building a strong future. Our community gathers together at the many delightful festivals and programs at our Fairfax County parks. There are music concerts and other live entertainment, farmers markets, craft shows, historical re-enactments, interpretive programs and even an antique car show to enjoy. This is another way in which parks make us rich — through *social capital*, i.e., the positive ways citizens interact with each other. Enjoying park programs as a community undoubtedly makes a big deposit in our social capital bank. According to research, thriving societies depend as much upon social capital for their success as economic capital.

And speaking of economic capital, our parks and green space even help to bolster

our county coffers. They are in large part responsible for attracting the best talent and businesses to our county, partnering with our schools (bolstering science and history education), protecting entire tracts of precious land from overdevelopment and costly infrastructure, and *most* important, supporting caring stewardship of our natural resources and cultural heritage that is so vital to quality of life in Fairfax County.

According to the January 2004 issue of *PreservAtion in Progress*, historic preservation "proved to be an engine of economic prosperity" in addition to adding to community pride and identity (more social capital), which in turn helps to protect historic sites and areas from encroachment and destruction.

The March 2004 issue of *Parks & Recreation* cites a study that summarized nearly two dozen research programs done across the nation investigating the *proximate*

principle, i.e. the increase in the value of properties surrounding green space. Depending upon a number of factors, such as how close the property is or what type of green space (park, conservation corridor, golf course), studies consistently showed an increase in property values ranging from three to 22 percent, the average being a six to 12 percent increase for properties adjacent to greenways.

Imagine Fairfax County without our beautiful nature centers, historical sites and green space. We would be a poorer community without them. No wonder Fairfax County is so full of parkees — folks that appreciate and love the parks.

SOURCES:

DeGraaf, Ph.D., Don and Deb Jordon, Re.D.
"Social Capital," *Parks & Recreation*, Dec.
2003, pp. 20-26

Nicholls, Ph.D., Sarah, "Measuring the Impact
of Parks on Property Values," *Parks &
Recreation*, March 2004, pp. 24-32

The Huntley Meadows
Park observation tower.

TEACHING TEACHERS

Nature Centers Inspire Science Education Teachers

By Kelly Decker

One of the goals of the leadership course that I teach is for teachers to become familiar with community resources that extend and support the elementary science classroom.

Fairfax County parks, in particular the nature centers, rank high on the list as an incredible community resource for our lead science teachers.

Every year, approximately 200 elementary lead teachers receive information about the park sites, which in itself is valuable. However, once the lead teachers actually visit the various park sites and learn from park staff about the programs from a student perspective, these lead teachers are able to take on a more active leadership role in their schools.

Riverbend Park, Huntley Meadows Park, and Ellanor C. Lawrence Park are just a few of the sites where staff and volunteers have shared their expertise and provided invaluable information to teachers on student programs. On recent training expeditions, teachers explored the ecology of wetland and meadow environments, while learning hands-on activities that they could use in their classrooms.

At Colvin Run Mill, teachers learned about activities involving simple machines, and at Green Spring Gardens, they learned about plants. Green Spring staff even taught them about grant-writing to help secure funds to create an outdoor learning classroom and garden.

The elementary teachers who visit these sites rave about the wonderful learning programs that are being offered.

The Park Authority does a fabulous job correlating their nature centers' learning programs to Fairfax County Public School's curriculum and the Virginia Standards of Learning. They are definitely a gem in my book!

DR. KELLY A. DECKER heads up Instructional Services for the FCPS Elementary Science Department.

Claiming the Tower

*I climb up and look down
On perky red trumpets'
Silent Fanfare
Sweet Nectar Here!*

*Layers of green dotted with
Catbirds and wrens
Sending out clear notes
And harsh exclamations
Of mine, mine, MINE!*

*Now full and quiet
I surrender my claim
To the person
I pass
On the stairs.*

– Carolyn Gamble,
Assistant Manager, Huntley Meadows

Opportunities for high school science students are also part of the nature centers' activities. Park staff oversees the research and activities, offering guidance and training. Here are just a few activities:

- ✓ Riverbend Park staff are working with McLean High School's advanced placement Environmental Science students to conduct stream monitoring and an amphibian survey at Scott's Run Nature Preserve.
- ✓ Hidden Oaks Nature Center and the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation work with Woodson High School students to conduct quarterly water surveys for the advanced placement biology class. Woodson's Science Honor Society also volunteers at Hidden Oaks.
- ✓ Classes from Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology are conducting forest classification studies within Riverbend Park.
- ✓ For middle schoolers, Riverbend Park staff provides science and nature programs for students studying English as a Second Language (ESL).

“I Would Much Rather Wash Rocks Than Dishes!” **Archaeology Volunteers Tell Why They DIG IT**

By Elizabeth A. Crowell, Manager of the Cultural Resource Management and Protection Section



Archaeology staff and volunteers excavate a site in Lorton.

American Indian
spear point.



Really and truly, when I tell people that I am an archaeologist, I often hear two responses: *Oh, that's really cool, or That's what I wanted to be when I grew up!* Today, we have many people working with the Park Authority's Cultural Resource Section who are living that childhood dream — volunteering on archaeological projects.

The Cultural Resource Section has a terrific, lively group of volunteers who have joined us from many different walks of life. They help with all aspects of our archaeological projects including fieldwork, laboratory work, research, computer work, and graphics. Their spirit and enthusiasm are as valuable to us as their hands-on accomplishments.

Volunteers provide the backbone of the very ambitious archaeology and cultural resource program. Their contribution allows us to record and document quickly vanishing archaeological sites. And they have a grand time doing it.

Why do you volunteer? Here are some of the responses:

I volunteer because I like handling artifacts that are thousands of years old and I'd much rather wash rocks than dishes! Additionally, I really enjoy the lab work because it's important to correctly record the data and label the artifacts for future research.

– **Marion Dana**

I volunteer in the archaeology program because I enjoy taking part in new discoveries about our past.

– **Rachel Roeske**

I became inebriated with archaeology at age three after exposure to it by a great uncle. With lapses between then and now, at age 87 plus, I am still interested, somewhat actively. It has been and still is very interesting. It grows more interesting as technology improves the ability to analyze residual artifacts and materials.

– **C.D. Cox**

Archaeology is intellectually stimulating, and at the same time, I can enjoy walking and working outdoors.

– **John Lintner**

It opens my mind to a fountain of knowledge.

– **Dolores Vestrich**

Volunteering allows me to meet interesting people who are doing what I am interested in. It gives me a chance to make a contribution.

– **C.K. Gailey**

If you would like to join our group of intrepid volunteers to work on a project doing fieldwork, lab work or research, please contact the Cultural Resources Volunteer Coordinator, Bob Wharton, at 703-534-3881, or email robert.wharton@fairfaxcounty.gov.

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HISTORY AND HERITAGE

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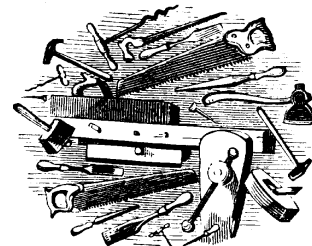
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